



Welcome to County Chamber Strings – Spring Term 2026

Welcome to the Spring Term! I am looking forward to working with you again over the coming term. This letter provides some updates to concerts, events and first and last rehearsals of the term.

This letter, along with any other communication from us throughout the year, will be available on the NMPAT website, as well as being emailed directly to families: www.nmpat.co.uk/letters

Rehearsal key dates

- **First rehearsal of the term** - Tuesday 13th January
- **Half term** (no rehearsal on this date) - Tuesday 17th February
- **Last rehearsal of the term** - Tuesday 14th March

Events and performances

Please make a note of all our planned performances and let me know as soon as possible if you can foresee any availability clashes. Any changes since your initial welcome letter are highlighted in **yellow** below. These dates are correct at the time of writing:

- **Saturday 7th February** – String Spectacular, **St Matthews Church, Northampton** (6.30pm start)
- **Sunday 22nd March** – Music for Youth Regional Festival, **Cripps Theatre** (start time TBC)
- **Sunday 5th July** – Second Generations, Derngate, Northampton (6.00pm start)

The most up to date information on all NMPAT concerts and events can be found on our online events calendar – which you can also link to your own personal calendar, if you would like to: www.nmpat.co.uk/events

Concert dress: we will perform wearing all black with at least quarter-length sleeves, including clean black shoes. Any skirts/dresses should be at or below knee length and worn with black tights.

The Friends of NMPAT

The Friends of Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust (FNMPAT) are an invaluable support to the work the County Ensembles, providing refreshments at rehearsals and concerts and arranging the sale of the ever-popular NMPAT Hoodies! Funds raised go towards subsidising the cost of travel to out-of-county events and purchasing specialist instruments for use in County Ensembles.

The Friends need the involvement of parents and supporters to continue to provide all that they do, and any help is welcome. You will find members of the Friends in the common room or kitchen area at NMPAT – do please have a conversation if you think you might be able to help in any way.

Additional opportunities

In addition to County Ensembles, we offer a wide range of additional opportunities to support your musical journey. Some details are included below and you can find more information on our website.

Theory classes - students taking ABRSM exams on their instrument / voice will need to have Grade 5 Theory in order to take the Grade 6 instrument/voice exam. For those students not taking ABRSM exams, it's a useful qualification to help develop your musical knowledge and understanding. For more information and to register for classes, please go to www.nmpat.co.uk/theory

Aural classes - to assist with ABRSM and Trinity College London exams, we offer additional Aural Classes. These are fully funded for NMPAT County Ensemble members. For more information and to register for classes, please go to www.nmpat.co.uk/aural

Music Production – classes take place online, via Zoom, on Tuesday evenings and are open to anyone, with no prior experience required. For more information and to register, please go to www.nmpat.co.uk/production

Centres: as an existing County Ensemble member, you are entitled to join a Centre for just £30 per term! Please notify the NMPAT Office (office@nmpat.co.uk) if you would like to utilise this offer. Some Centres also offer leadership and work experience opportunities for older students. More information can be found at www.nmpat.co.uk/centres

I am really looking forward to working with you this term and look forward to seeing you at our next rehearsal on **Tuesday 13th January**.

Kate Bickerdike
Director: County Chamber Strings
kbickerdike@nmpat.co.uk